



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

September 16, 2019

Dear Members of the Meredith Elementary School Community:

Today, School District staff met with members from Meredith's leadership team, representatives from the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, members of the Philadelphia Healthy Schools Coalition, and a parent representative from the Meredith School Advisory Council to discuss the results of the inspections and develop a full remediation plan and repair schedule.

On August 31, 2019, the Environmental Science Director for the Philadelphia Federation of Teacher's Health & Welfare Fund ("PFTH&WF/U") notified the School District's Office of Environmental Management and Services about a Meredith teacher who had been diagnosed with mesothelioma, a cancer considered to be caused by asbestos exposure. As a result of that notification, the School District and PFT began working on a joint evaluation process to assess asbestos-related conditions in order to help ensure that those now in the building understand the current situation as clearly and as accurately as possible.

The School District of Philadelphia's Office of Environmental Management Services developed a plan (shared with the PFTH&WF/U on 9/6/2019) and hired licensed, external inspectors to:

- Look for and uncover asbestos-containing materials in the Meredith school building. This included collecting bulk sampling of materials, such as the auditorium ceiling and floor tile, that were assumed to contain asbestos and show visible damage.
- Conduct an IEQ evaluation to identify other issues such as moisture intrusion, ventilation issues, pest control, and asthma triggers
- Perform a comprehensive paint and plaster survey to identify damage/positive paint.

Joint evaluations were conducted starting on Monday, September 9th and concluded on Saturday, September 14th. The lead paint assessment and testing on the second and third floors will be completed this week. The results of the assessment should be back by Monday, September 23rd.

Our findings specific to asbestos containing materials in the building included:

- *Minor damage to floor tiles and pipe insulation*

- *The identification of spaces to remove additional pipe insulation as a proactive measure*

Asbestos remediation and air testing activities were conducted in the gym on Saturday, September 14th by the School District and the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers. Due to the potential for future damage and disturbance of asbestos containing materials, **the gymnasium will be closed for the next three weeks.** During this time, the space will be cordoned off to remove all remaining asbestos containing pipe insulation. The work will be performed by a licensed third party contractor. Once this work is done, School District and PFT will do the necessary air testing to ensure that the space is fully cleaned and safe.

This weekend, the School District also conducted repairs as a result of the Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) inspection. These repairs included addressing outstanding work orders in the plumbing, glazing, and carpentry trades.

We have developed a working plan to address the remaining areas that have potential for damage of asbestos containing materials, including the cafeteria, a first grade classroom, the teacher's lounge, and computer room. As the scope of work is finalized, we will share the work schedule and confirm start dates. Please note that future repairs may require the closure of a space and the temporary relocation of educational activities.

Written results of all environmental inspections and test results will continue to be shared with the Meredith faculty and school community.

We look forward to meeting with the Meredith staff on Wednesday, September 18th to educate them about the "do's and don't's" associated with asbestos materials in the building.

We appreciate your understanding, patience, and flexibility. You may contact the Office of Environmental Management and Services at 215-400-4730 with your questions, feedback or other concerns.

Sincerely,

Danielle Floyd
Chief Operating Officer

Brian Joseph
Director of Environmental Services

Cc: Dr. Sonya Harrison, Neighborhood Network Assistant Superintendent